

Message Text

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SUBJECT: "KROKODIL" ON AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS

1. ISSUE NUMBER EIGHT OF THE SOVIET SATIRICAL WEEKLY
"KROKODIL" CONTAINS YET ANOTHER DIG AT AMERICAN CORRESPON-
DENTS ALLEGEDLY DOUBLING AS INTELLIGENCE AGENTS. PIECE
(ENTITLED "SOVMESTITELI", THAT IS, PERSONS HOLDING DOWN
MORE THAN ONE JOB) BEARS BYLINE OF THE MYSTERIOUS
V. VALENTINOV, WHO AUTHORED MOST OF THE ATTACKS ON
CORRESPONDENTS PUBLISHED BY "LITERATURNAYA GAZETA" OVER THE
PAST TWO YEARS (WE ONCE REPORTED UNVERIFIED INFORMATION
THAT VALENTINOV IS PSEUDONYM FOR MFA PRESS DEPARTMENT
GHOSTWRITERS).

2. INDEED, THE REDOUBTABLE VALENTINOV HAS TO GO BACK IN
TIME TO CONSTRUCT THE PREMISE FOR HIS VENTURE INTO
"HUMOR". IN CONTEXT OF SUPPOSED WESTERN COMPLAINTS AT
BELGRADE OVER DIFFICULT WORKING CONDITIONS FOR FOREIGN
JOURNALISTS IN MOSCOW, VALENTINOV RESURRECTS NAMES OF
U.S. NEWSMEN KRIMSKY (AP), WREN (NEW YORK TIMES), FRIENDLY
(NEWSWEEK) AND TOTH (L.A. TIMES), WHICH "'NOBLE' QUARTET
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... WORKED NOT SO MUCH FOR THEIR EDITORIAL BOARDS AS
FOR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS." AND SO VALENTINOV PROCEEDS TO
CONSTRUCT HYPOTHETICAL CONVERSATION WHICH MIGHT HAVE TAKEN
PLACE "IN THE MOSCOW BUREAU OF ONE OF THESE AMERICAN
PUBLICATIONS PRIOR TO THE EXPULSION OF THE INFAMOUS
FOUR" (COMMENT: DESPITE VALENTINOV'S INSINUATION, ONLY
KRIMSKY WAS EXPELLED - THE OTHER THREE CORRESPONDENTS

NAMED ALL LEFT UNDER THEIR OWN STEAM, ALTHOUGH BOTH FRIENDLY'S AND TOTH'S DEPARTURES WERE ACCOMPANIED BY A GOOD DEAL OF CONTROVERSY AND FANFARE IN THE SOVIET PRESS, CHIEFLY FROM VALENTINOV).

3. THE SCENARIO CREATED BY VALENTINOV (FROM WHOM ART BUCHWALD AND RUSSELL BAKER HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR) HAS ONE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT, "BOB", EXPLAINING HIS METHODS OF "NEWS COVERAGE" TO HIS BUREAU CHIEF. BOB'S METHODOLOGY INCLUDES INVISIBLE INK, CONCEALED MINI-MICROPHONES, CLANDESTINE PHOTOS OF "SOVIET TUNNELS AND BRIDGES", MICROFILM AND DEAD DROPS. FINALLY, BOB REVEALS HIMSELF TO HIS BUREAU CHIEF AS AN AGENT OF THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, ONLY TO LEARN THAT HIS "BUREAU CHIEF" WORKS FOR THE C.I.A. AND HAS THE GOODS ON BOB, WHOSE "GIRL FRIEND" IS IN REALITY AN EMPLOYEE OF WEST GERMAN INTELLIGENCE AND HAS TAPED ALL OF BOB'S "TENDER OOHs AND AAHS". IN A PANIC, BOB RUSHES OFF TO WRITE AMBASSADOR GOLDBERG ABOUT THIS INFRINGEMENT OF HIS JOURNALISTIC STATUS.

4. AFTER THIS "LIGHT-HEARTED" LITTLE COMEDY, VALENTINOV REVERTS TO HIS "LITERATURNAYA GAZETA" STYLE FOR THE PUNCH LINE "SUCH IS THE 'PROFESSIONAL' ACTIVITY IN THE USSR OF SOME PSEUDO-CORRESPONDENTS. . . . HERE IN MOSCOW - WE DON'T KNOW HOW IT IS OUT THERE IN OTHER COUNTRIES - IT'S EASY FOR JOURNALISTS TO WORK. BUT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SPIES IT'S TOUGH. THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS, THE WAY IT IS, AND THE WAY IT ALWAYS WILL BE."

5. COMMENT: HAVING SEEN NARY A WORD ON VALENTINOV'S "NOBLE QUARTET" IN THE SOVIET PRESS FOR OVER HALF A YEAR NOW (SINCE THE SEND-OFF GIVEN TOTH AND A FEW GRATUITOUS CHEAP SHOTS AFTER HE WAS SAFELY OUT OF THE COUNTRY), IT MAY SIMPLY HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED TIME FOR ONE OF THE REGULAR PUBLIC WARNINGS TO THE SOVIET PUBLIC ABOUT THE VILE AIMS OF WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS, IN WHICH CASE "KROKODIL" WOULD REACH THE REQUISITE BROAD AUDIENCE. ANOTHER POSSIBLE INTENTION COULD BE TO REFRESH SOVIET MEMORIES CONCERNING THE ALLEGED INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES OF U.S. NEWSMEN AS A PRELUDE TO DRAGGING THE NAMES OF VALENTINOV'S FOURSOME OR OTHER JOURNALISTS INTO EVENTUAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST SHCHARANSKIY AND/OR OTHER INCARCERATED DISSIDENTS. TOON

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